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REPORT (PART II)

ON

NATIVE-OWNED ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending Saturday, 12th July 1902.

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I.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.
(a)—Police.

928. The *Indian Empire*, quoting a retired Police Officer, says that the real reform of the police must commence at the top, viz., in the ranks of District Superintendents of Police. These officers, who enter the service by the "backdoor of nomination are," it says, "admittedly incompetent men with little education and less brains," under whose "baneful, yet powerful, influence, not being admirers themselves of truth and manliness, a Sub-Inspector's love of mankind, of truth, straightforwardness, and sense of duty begin to evaporate."

929. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* publishes the following letter from a Magistrate to an Assistant Superintendent of Police. It suppresses names, but vouches for the absolute correctness of the letter :—

The District Magistrate and the Police.
 Dear B—,
 I am not quite satisfied with the manner in which the cases under section 110, Criminal Procedure Code, are being sent up. I have explained my views to the Sub-Inspector and he agrees with them. They are not, however, being paid much attention to. So to avoid trouble and delay and to put a check on the crime, it is advisable that we should consider the matter together.

To-morrow at 8-30 A.M. at my house would suit me. Can you come and bring the Inspector, too, at that time. If not, what time would suit you?

Yours sincerely,

B. H.

19-1-02.

The journal comments as follows :—

Is not this an excellent way of administering criminal justice? Yet we live under the enlightened rule of England!

Let us picture the position suggested by the letter of the Magistrate quoted above. The police hauls up a man, and then goes to the Magistrate with the papers of his case. The police and the Magistrate sit together, and the former explains to the latter all the mysteries of the case. The Magistrate thinks that the case is weak, and says so to his police subordinate. "I think," says he, "he may escape if I convict him on the evidence supplied by you." The Magistrate points out to the police the defects of the case and orders him to strengthen his position. And we all know how a weak case is strengthened by the police when it is corrupt. It was under this section, we believe, that Rai Iswari Persad, of Patna was prosecuted and almost harassed to death. This shows that even leading and respectable members of our society can be ruined by putting this section into operation, if they only incur the displeasure of the police. If Rai Iswari Persad escaped, it was because he was a wealthy and resourceful man of considerable public spirit. But we can guarantee that he would have fared in another way if the police had been invited by the trying Magistrate to his house and advised by him as to how they should proceed on with the case.

930. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, while expressing satisfaction at the probability of Mr. Fraser, Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, being appointed President of the Police Commission, offers the following advice to the Commission :—

"The Government should be addressed by the Commission to lay down the rule that the first duty of the police should be to afford protection, because the detection of crime will be easier if the people are made to look upon the police as their protectors and not oppressors. The heads of the district police should, as a rule, be natives of the soil or those Europeans who are sympathetic, cultured, and thoroughly well acquainted with the manners, customs, and language of the country. Under the guidance of such capable men, it will be impossible for a Sub-Inspector to lead the District Superintendent of Police by the nose and create scandals like those of Noakhali, Rajshahi, Mymensingh, Burdwan, and other places."

INDIAN EMPIRE,
1st July 1902.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
4th July 1902.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
6th July 1902.

Then, again, the police should never be subordinate to the District Magistrate, so long as the latter is vested with judicial powers. If the District Magistrate is, however, to be the immediate superior of the police, then let him be divested of his privilege of trying police-sent-up cases. It is not correct to say that a Magistrate cannot keep the peace of the district if he has not judicial powers and also the police under his command. How is peace in the Presidency towns preserved? Is it more difficult to keep the peace of a district like Hooghly than a town like Calcutta, full of *gondas* and other *budmashes*? Certainly not. And yet we find the Police Commissioner keeping the town in perfect order, though he does not enjoy those judicial powers which the District Magistrates do.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
30th June 1902.

931. The *Hindoo Patriot* points out that for the success of the newly constituted 3rd Court, a better-equipped ministerial department is urgently and immediately necessary.

The third Original Court.

There has been notice of the approaching 3rd Court for some time, and yet none of those immediately concerned seem to have been ready for it.

"This state of unpreparedness shows that the agitation by the newspaper press and the public bodies notwithstanding, a third Court is not urgently necessary, or it may show that the litigants and the profession have not yet learnt to take it seriously, and look upon it as too much of a good thing to be true. On the other hand, it may also show that the resources of the profession are not equal to a third Court, and that attorneys have not appliances enough to be able to cope with work in three Courts or that there are not eligible counsel enough to do this work."

HINDOO PATRIOT,
30th June 1902.

932. Referring to the orders of the High Court in the case of the Serajganj *pardanashin* lady, the *Hindoo Patriot* says:—

The Serajganj lady's case.

It is not for us to pass strictures on the merits of this judgment of the High Court that has created sufficient alarm in the public mind, and contributed not a little to shake public confidence in respect of its *infallibility*. The public verdict has already declared itself in condemnation of this judicial decision of the highest tribunal of the country.

It passes our comprehension to make out what equitable principle has influenced the High Court to subordinate the exercise of its *own* discretion to that of the Subdivisional Magistrate of Serajganj.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
1st July 1902.

933. Continuing its observations on this case, the same paper learns that a memorial will be presented to Government on this subject by the Bengal Landholders' Association.

Ibid.

As the case has wounded the feelings and susceptibilities of the Indian community, it ought, says the journal, to form the subject of a legitimate and constitutional agitation and an influential representation to Government. The sections should be so construed either by authoritative judicial interpretation or by a necessary amendment in the law, that every regard be paid to the sanctity of the zenana in respect of their personal attendance in court, excepting in cases of heinous offences.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
2nd July 1902.

934. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, learning that it is in contemplation to drop the prosecution of Zahurul Husain, the Honorary Magistrate, and others in connection with the Rajshahi *Muharrum* cases, trusts that Government will never allow the withdrawal of the cases and thereby add to the seething discontent which prevails all over the country in this connection.

The Rajshahi case.

The following comments on the judgment of the District Magistrate in the marginally-noted case are taken from the *Indian Mirror*:—

INDIAN MIRROR,
3rd July 1902.

The Lady Doctor abduction case at Malda.

There seems to be little room for doubt about the abduction itself, since in that regard the accused, a wealthy zamindar, entered a plea of guilty. The punishment—a fine of Rs. 1,000—would appear to be hopelessly inadequate to the enormity of the offence. Mr. Gupta

is an able and conscientious Magistrate, and we have heard nothing against him. But in this particular case, since certain features of the case presented difficulties to the Magistrate, as he himself said in his judgment, the only and best course open to him was to commit the accused to the Sessions.

Why did he not do so?

936. The *Bengalee* is surprised to learn that the appeal of the rioters who have been convicted by the Deputy Magistrate of Tamluk is to be heard by Mr. T. W. Richardson, the Judge specially deputed to try the persons

The appeal of the Nandigram rioters.

charged with the murder of the Sub-Inspector. Although it has the highest possible respect for Mr. Richardson, he is after all a human being, with the bias and the imperfections of human nature. As a Judge, trying the persons charged with the murder of the Sub-Inspector, he must have conceived some bias, one way or the other, in connection with the rioters whose appeal he will have to dispose of. But it is a matter of first importance that the Judge should be absolutely free from bias of any kind. The journal trusts it is not yet too late to upset the arrangement and allow the appeal of the rioters to be heard by the Sessions Judge of Midnapore, who had nothing whatever to do with the Nandigram cases.

BENGALIE,
6th July 1902.

(d)—Education.

937. The *East* calls for the reform of the Education Department and trusts His Excellency the Viceroy will give the matter his consideration along with the question of reforming the Universities. The points complained of are:—

The Education Department.

EAST,
28th June 1902.

- (1) The office of Director of Public Instruction as the head of the Department "is so corrupt that it seems to have little or no regard for the fulfilment of the primary object of education."
- (2) That Professors are required to lecture on several subjects and not the one in which they are specialists.
- (3) The posting of Professors as Inspectors of Schools and the appointment of unfledged M. A.s in their places.
- (4) The frequent transfers of teachers in the School Department.
- (5) That Inspectors, Deputy Inspectors, and Sub-Deputy Inspectors of Schools in making their tours keep more in view their travelling allowances than the inspection of classes.

938. The *Indian Empire* controverts the opinion alleged to have been offered to the Bengali Muhammadans by Dr. Ross, the Principal, Calcutta Madrasa, that the reading of the Bengali language has a tendency to emasculate them, and says that the cause of the emasculation is to be found in the "vigorous" administration of the country and the chronic poverty of the people and not in the language of the Bengali Babu. Dr. Ross, it adds, is evidently a zealous disciple of the divide-and-rule policy, for the object of his advice is too thinly veiled not to be seen through even by those whom he addressed.

Dr. Ross and the Bengali language.

INDIAN EMPIRE,
1st July 1902.

939. The *Indian Mirror*, in publishing the details as regards the methods of education and the advantages offered to Indian students proceeding to the University of California to finish their education, remarks:—

Indian youths and American Universities.

INDIAN MIRROR,
2nd July 1902.

The time has now come for our countrymen to assert themselves, send forth their sons to American institutions that they may take with them Indian influence, and make known to the world the oldest and noblest land that history has ever known, and coming back let them enrich the motherland with the knowledge acquired by introducing into the educational institutions of India those methods and that spirit of progress, which are making America great. Let the wealthy men of India come forward, and endow their colleges with funds, as the Americans are doing, and let these colleges be conducted on the same plan as is followed in the Universities of America.

INDIAN MIRROR,
5th July 1902.

940. The *Indian Mirror* reiterates its advice to Indian youths to make Japan their educating ground. It holds up for emulation the Japanese student's modesty which leads them to proceed to America in search of still further knowledge, and quotes a Japanese authority to show that their studies in America secure them lucrative employment in their own country.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
30th June 1902.

941. The *Hindu Patriot* adverts to the Municipal debate of Friday last, when the Chairman was overruled by the Commissioners in the matter of the appointment of an outsider as Officiating Chief Engineer, *vice* Mr. Deverell, on leave. In referring to the Chairman's speech that, if the amendment of appointing an officer of the existing staff was carried, the responsibility would rest upon the Corporation, as he wished the Corporation to fully understand that they had retained in their staff a large number of men who were incompetent, the *Patriot* says:—

"This is a sweeping condemnation and little can be expected in the shape of town improvements with divided Councils like this. It is a pity indeed that in their desperation our Indian friends have ceased to take almost any interest in municipal matters either in the press or outside it, and it is not too late yet for them to remember that European interest and European stake in the city is truly microscopic, after all is done and said. When will they wake up again? Scenes and incidents like this are, to say the least, not very edifying nor profitable, and the over-assessed and badly-served Calcutta rate-payer, whose patience Job himself might imitate with advantage, cries to be rid of such agonies."

(h)—General.

POWER AND GUARDIAN,
29th June 1902.

942. The following paragraph is taken from *Power and Guardian*:—

Messrs. Lee and Roe.

Is it possible that Mr. Roe of Rajshahi fame has been pushed upwards while Mr. Lee, the Judge, has been transferred to Jessore, one of the most malarious districts in Bengal? This is not unique in Bengal under the present régime. That Judge is most unfortunate who would venture to proceed against a Police Superintendent. Mr. Lee must have counted without his hosts, and the fate of the Noakhali Judge should have put him on his guard. But there is no use quarrelling over spilt milk. The lesson, however, is significant.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
1st July 1902.

943. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* after thanking the Government and the Maharaja of Tippera for their generosity in connection with the establishment of an Observatory in Bengal, asks:—

But will a native of India be put in charge of the institution? If not, we withdraw the thanks offered to His Highness and to the Bengal Government. A small Observatory under a European is of no interest to us whatsoever, but is on the other hand a waste of public money and misuse of Tippera liberality. Now that Chandra Shekhara has earned a European reputation and has given proof of genius and power of independent research, he should be brought from his native village, recluse as he is, and put in charge of this institution. Of course, the Observatory is doing good work, for it enables students to acquire a practical knowledge of astronomy; but anyhow, it should be put in charge of an Indian, when one like Chandra Shekhara is available in Bengal.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
2nd July 1902.

944. Those Indians who hanker after titles of honour ought to remember, says the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, that, though these decorations have their transient pleasures, they have also their penalties which are substantial. Firstly, they are an expensive luxury. Secondly, one who is thoroughly independent can never expect them. The recipients of honour have not only to purchase their *khelats* at a tolerably heavy price, but have also to spend large sums of money and sacrifice their independence to please the authorities. Then again, titled men

practically place their reputation at the disposal of the donors of their titles. Chowdry Debi Sing of Meerut has just been deprived of his Rai Bahadurship as a punishment. Now, if this man had not been honoured with this title for which he was made to pay heavily, he would not have run the risk of being dishonoured in the way he has been.

"The Government also now and then makes people laugh by the manner it seeks to honour the leading men of our society. For instance, it has conferred the title of 'Kumar' upon Rameshwar Malia, who is already a Kumar. His mother was a Maharani, his elder brother a Raja, and his younger brother is a 'Kumar.' And in his old age, the Government comes forward to honour him with a title which he has been enjoying almost from his infancy! Similarly, two or three years ago, the title of 'Rai Bahadur' was conferred upon Kumar Manmatha Nath Mitter, although he had always been addressed as Kumar by his countrymen."

945. The *Hindoo Patriot* affirms that the appointment of Lord Alverstone, Lord Chief Justice in England, as arbitrator for the settlement of disputes between the Indian

Indian Army charges.

Government and the English Government in connection with the geographical apportionment of the army charges of India, runs counter to the recommendation embodied in the report of the Welby Commission, that all disputed questions should be referred to Parliament for final determination. The question arises, who is to represent the cause of India and plead its case against the English representative of Lord Alverstone's trained abilities? Is the case to be decided *ex-parte*?

946. The *Bengalee* refers to the case in which a mukhtear practising at Khulna has made some serious allegations against Babu Tara Prasanna Acharjya, a Deputy Magistrate, amongst which is that the latter sent the former to *hajat* without recording any proceedings against him.

A mukhtear versus a Deputy Magistrate in Khulna.

The journal is dissatisfied with the manner in which the District Magistrate, to whom the petition was made and who exonerated the Deputy Magistrate, dealt with the case. Was the allegation of the mukhtear, it asks, true or false? If true, the Deputy Magistrate should have been censured. If false, the mukhtear should have been proceeded against. Nothing was done, and the *Bengalee* is bound to say that the upshot of the appeal of the mukhtear to the Magistrate was most unsatisfactory.

III.—LEGISLATION.

947. The *Bengalee* holds the Christian Missionary responsible for the enactment of Act XX of 1863. It was the direct outcome of the agitation set up by him, and

Religious endowments.

although the Government has doubtless realized that the Act was a woful blunder, it shrinks from undoing it—apparently for the sole reason that educated public opinion in India demands the repeal of the Act.

"Our Government seems to feel a peculiar satisfaction in ignoring the wishes of our educated fellow-countrymen. It is perhaps superfluous for us to point out that the advocates of repeal do not desire to see the endowments brought under the direct or even the indirect control of Government officers. All that they propose is that the control should be vested in responsible popular bodies in place of the existing agency which seems to be responsible neither to God nor to man, with the Civil Court as the final authority for the settlement of disputes. But Government would not have anything to do with even such a moderate proposal. Perhaps, it is anticipated that a time will come when there will be few endowments left, either to be mismanaged or to be well-managed. If the present state of things is suffered to continue without let or hindrance, then this anticipation is sure to be realized—perhaps much sooner than even the most unthinking opponents of the proposed reform expect."

IV.—NATIVE STATES.

948. The *Bengalee* suggests the establishment of an Advisory Council of Native Princes to decide the claims of English traders in Native States, as well as all questions affecting those States. With such a Council it

Native Princes as Counsellors of the Empire.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
4th July 1902.

BENGALIAN,
4th July 1902.

BENGALIAN,
3rd July 1902.

BENGALIAN,
3rd July 1902.

would be impossible, it says, for the enforcement of the revolutionary idea, which is apt to produce such intense dissatisfaction, of making a distinction between State property and the personal property of a Maharaja. "Such, a Council, moreover, would place the Government in touch with the ideas of the Native Princes and would help the Government to move along the line of least resistance. The Foreign Office is helpless and impotent in the presence of a masterful Viceroy, and must say ditto to him. Nor is the Foreign Office always in a position to gauge with accuracy the currents of feeling which permeate through the Native States. The ablest of Viceroys with the best of motives may commit mistakes. The Advisory Council of Native Princes would raise the timely note of warning."

BENGALIEE,
5th July 1902.

949. Under this heading the *Bengalee* publishes the adverse view taken by the *Calcutta Review* of the action of the Government of India in the Panna case, and points out

"As others see us."

that it is obvious that the Indian journals are not altogether unreasonable in making similar complaints. The unanimous disapproval of all sections of the community on this case emphasizes the conclusion that, having regard to the condition of public opinion and the altered relations between the Paramount Power and the Native States, the time has now come for a change in the policy of the Government in relation to the Native States, to wit, the institution of an Advisory Council of Native Princes.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

BENGALIEE,
2nd July 1902.

950. In view of the gloomy outlook in Bombay owing to the rains holding off, the *Bengalee* urges the institution of an enquiry on the lines of the recommendation of the

The outlook in Bombay.

Famine Union into the "root-cause" of famines and the best means of meeting and getting rid of them. The only objection to an enquiry being held in connection with typical villages is the difficulty as to who should select the typical villages. To this objection the *Bengalee* replies—Let the Government select the villages. The Government may be trusted to perform this duty. Whether the villages are typical or not will be abundantly clear from the enquiry.

BEHAR TIMES,
4th July 1902.

951. The *Behar Times* writes as follows:—

The condition of the crops in the Patna Division.

The districts of the Patna Division are passing through a crisis. Unless rain and plenty of it falls very shortly, the outlook will be a dismal one. In many places the indigo crop has been burnt almost to the ground. The young Indian-corn crop is dying fast, and the same applies to the rice. There is still time to transplant rice from the seed-beds on good rain falling, but the beds themselves are suffering badly. Considering present prospects, prices ruling in the bazars are low.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

BEHAR HERALD,
28th June 1902.

952. It is undoubtedly very easy to fling allegations of intemperance and hostility at the native-edited papers in India, says the *Behar Herald*, but it is most difficult to prove

Native-edited papers.

them. The fact is, that any expression of opinion which is opposed to that of the organs which advocate the interests of the "selfish governing classes," is set down as inimical to the Government and therefore disloyal. The *Herald* quotes the opinion of Sir Richard Garth on the good work done by the native press in India, and, while repudiating the charge of habitual intemperance and insobriety, regrets that Englishmen should have come to be so demoralised in India as to consider as an abuse of the privilege of freedom any criticism which is not all "rose-water and kisses."

WEEKLY CHRONICLE,
1st July 1902.

953. The *Weekly Chronicle* (Assam) referring to the Sivaji celebrations in Calcutta, remarks:—

The Sivaji festival in Calcutta.

It marks a new era in the history of the relations between the different nationalities inhabiting this country, and is certainly a farther steps towards the growing solidarity of sentiment among them, and the possible unification of the races, and as such the movement should be hailed with delight by all sincere well-wishers of the country.

954. The following is taken from the *Hindoo Patriot* :—

The Sivaji festival in Calcutta.

Why should there be a persistent endeavour in some quarters to smell the rat where no expert rat-catcher can possibly find the smallest rodent? The Sivaji festival in Calcutta, for not holding which by the way, Calcutta has not been any the poorer so long and which might well have been dispensed with, has been made the occasion for writing a heap of worthless nonsense in the Anglo-Indian press, that to the true friend of the people and the Government is truly marvellous as it is painful. Attempt to detect sedition and disloyalty in any of the slightest movement of the people, festive or otherwise, is not a sign of strength or wisdom. Our rulers know or ought to know that sedition and disloyalty are a moral, a physical and economic impossibility in this country not to put the matter much higher, and the Anglo-Indian press do no good by opening out its correspondence columns to those who pretend to the contrary. As for our own friends we need hardly remind them that the festivals in honour of Ram and Krishna have been growing somewhat unfashionable and obsolete among the so-called educated and enlightened, and these might be revived and made more stirring for the purposes of re-awakening national life if that be the object of the present movement. For true growth of national life in these days, all elements of friction and bad blood must be carefully and religiously eschewed.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
3rd July 1902.

OFFICE OF THE INSPR.-GENERAL
OF POLICE, L. P.,
WRITERS' BUILDINGS,
The 12th July 1902.

H. B. ST. LEGER,
Asst. to the Insp.-General of Police, L. P.

